

TELLY award, and many other awards. Through WCCA, Mauro offers citizens of Worcester from all walks of life and opinions the chance to speak their mind and be heard.

Mauro's soft-spoken exterior gives way to lively piano and vocals when he performs with his popular musical combo Jazzed Up, which he started in 2012. For the past few years, Jazzed Up has performed at the Worcester Columbus Day Parade Grand Marshal Banquet. Jazzed Up has been nominated Best Jazz Act at the Worcester Music Awards 2012–2015, and in 2014, Worcester Living Magazine voted Jazzed Up Best Entertainment group in Central Massachusetts.

Mauro is proud of his Italian heritage. Like so many Americans, his family came to the United States in search of a better life. His own experiences—hearing of the oppression and prejudice faced by immigrants when they first arrived in the United States—have made Mauro a lifelong supporter of the underdog and a strong voice for community service in Worcester. Mauro has been a fierce advocate for preserving Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. As President of the Mount Carmel Preservation Society, he has fought tirelessly to save the church, which has been an epicenter for the Italian-American community in Worcester for nearly ninety years.

But Mr. Speaker, I rise today not just to recognize Mauro's public service, but to congratulate him on a new honor—on October 8, 2017 Mauro will march down Shrewsbury Street as Grand Marshal of the 2017 Worcester Columbus Day Parade. I join with all the residents of Worcester in thanking Mauro for his service to our community, and congratulating him on his selection as Grand Marshal of the 2017 Worcester Columbus Day Parade.

#### COMMEMORATING THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PAUL HALL CENTER FOR MARITIME TRAINING AND EDUCATION

##### HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, which is located in Maryland's Fifth Congressional District. It is one of the leading schools for merchant mariners in the United States and a major contributor to the development and maintenance of our nation's proud maritime traditions.

The Paul Hall Center, which was founded in 1967 by late Seafarers International Union President Paul Hall, runs the leading training program for unlicensed merchant mariners in the United States today. It offers more U.S. Coast Guard-approved training courses than any other school in the nation and has trained tens of thousands of mariners since its founding. The Paul Hall Center's apprenticeship program, which is registered with the U.S. Department of Labor, has been praised as one of the most effective apprenticeship programs in the country and was honored as an "Innovator and Trailblazer" by the Labor Department in 2012. Today, the Paul Hall Center provides students a world-class education, preparing new merchant mariners to take their places on vessels sailing in both foreign and U.S.-flag fleets.

It is critical that our country maintain a merchant marine capable of transporting a large share of the seagoing commerce of the United States. The Paul Hall Center's programs help ensure a sufficient number of well-trained, highly skilled merchant mariners to crew U.S.-flag vessels both for the privately owned merchant marine and for U.S. government-operated fleets.

To that end, I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing the significant contributions that the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education has made to our economy, our homeland security, and our national defense through its support of the U.S. Merchant Marine. I hope they will also join me in congratulating the Paul Hall Center on reaching this fiftieth anniversary milestone. I'm proud to represent this wonderful institution in the United States Congress.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF JIM WHELAN

##### HON. BILL PASCARELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Mr. PASCARELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jim Whelan, a friend, colleague, and accomplished public servant, who passed away Tuesday August 22nd at the age of 68 at his home in Atlantic City, NJ.

Jim was born in Philadelphia on November 8, 1948. His academic and athletic career is nothing short of extraordinary. Jim became a nationally ranked distance swimmer while pursuing a B.A. in English at Temple University, later leading to his induction into the Temple University Athletic Hall of Fame in 1995 and the International Swimming Hall of Fame in 1999. Always passionate about helping others, Jim went on to receive a Masters of Education at Temple University, taking a job as a teacher in the Atlantic City School District shortly thereafter.

This was only the beginning of Jim's lifelong dedication to public service in Atlantic City and New Jersey. In 1981, Jim was elected to his first seat in public office, as a member of the Atlantic City Council. In 1990, Jim was elected Mayor of Atlantic City in a landslide, a symbol of how beloved he had become in Atlantic City. Jim and I served together as Mayors in New Jersey for seven years.

Jim was an outstanding Mayor, fighting tirelessly to revitalize Atlantic City. His work will surely be remembered for generations to come as crucial to the growth and development of Atlantic City. Serving alongside him as a New Jersey Mayor was nothing short of an honor and a pleasure. An even greater pleasure still was his consistent friendship and support. Throughout our years of friendship, I knew I could always count on Jim as a confidant and for his measured, thoughtful perspective.

As a Mayor, Jim focused his support on not just Atlantic City, but on legislation addressing the needs of all New Jersey Mayors and their Municipalities through his active service in the New Jersey Conference of Mayors. Eventually, he served as President of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors from 2000 to 2001. This only speaks to Jim's consistent dedication to helping others in any way he can. His

decade of outstanding service as Mayor led to Jim being recognized as the Mayor of the Year by the New Jersey Conference of Mayors in 2001.

After departing as Mayor of Atlantic City in 2001, Jim returned to teaching. Only four years later, he was elected to the State Assembly of New Jersey. Two years after that, he was elected to the New Jersey Senate. Jim brought the very same traits that made him such a wonderful Mayor to legislating on behalf of all of New Jersey. The New Jersey Conference of Mayors again recognized Jim in 2009 as Legislator of the Year.

After a life of service to Atlantic City and New Jersey, Jim's honesty, dedication, love for his constituency, and kindness will be missed dearly. Jim is survived by his wife, Kathy, and their son Richard. Jim Whelan's service and devotion to his wife Kathy and son Richard were remarkable in every way. He was truly an honorable man who made this place better. My sincerest condolences are with Kathy, Richard, Jim's entire family, his staff and colleagues during this trying time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Mr. Jim Whelan's colleagues, family and friends, all those whose lives he has touched, and me, in recognizing Mr. Jim Whelan's remarkable life of public service.

#### KENNETH SMITH

##### HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Petty Officer Kenneth "Kenny" Aaron Smith of Cherry Hill, New Jersey for his service to our nation.

Petty Officer Smith was born in Jackson, Michigan in 1995 and moved to Chesapeake, Virginia at the age of 10. When he was a teenager, Petty Officer Smith moved to South Jersey with his father, a Petty Officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve. In 2013, he graduated from Cherry Hill High School—East, and followed in his father's and grandfather's footsteps to join the U.S. Navy. As a third generation sailor, Petty Officer Smith was in his fourth year of serving.

During his time in the Navy, Petty Officer Smith worked in radar technology and held the rank of Electronics Technician, 3rd class and was posthumously advanced to the rank of Electronics Technician 2nd Class. During his free time, he published science fiction writings through an online platform known as 'Wattpad.' These writings were well liked by fans of the website. As an avid gamer, he also aspired to eventually pursue a career as a video game developer.

Petty Officer Smith is remembered by those close to him as being adventurous, loyal and patriotic. During his time at sea, Petty Officer Smith's ship had been to Australia and Japan, and he was looking forward to traveling to more places throughout the world. Petty Officer Smith was also known for his dedication to human rights, a love for animals and the ability to leave a positive mark on those he was acquainted with.

Petty Officer Smith was a true American hero who sadly lost his life while serving in the United States Navy. His service and sacrifice

to our country will not be forgotten. Mr. Speaker, Petty Officer Kenneth Aaron Smith was a great American who exemplified the true meaning of patriotism. I ask you to join me in honoring the memory of this truly exceptional young man.

**TRIBUTE TO RICH WELLS, VICE  
PRESIDENT AND SITE DIRECTOR  
OF MICHIGAN OPERATIONS FOR  
THE DOW CHEMICAL COMPANY**

**HON. JOHN R. MOOLENAAR**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2017*

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Rich Wells, Vice President and Site Director of Michigan Operations for The Dow Chemical Company, in recognition of his service and his many contributions to the Great Lakes Bay Region as he begins the next step of his journey as the Vice President of Texas Operations.

An influential member of the community, Rich originally moved to Midland to work for Dow after he graduated from the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. During his illustrious 34-year career, Rich has gone on to serve in several leadership roles within The Dow Chemical Company. Before his selection as the Vice President and Site Director of Michigan Operations, Rich served as the Vice President for Global Government Affairs and Public Policy.

During his tenure as Vice President and Site Director of Michigan Operations, Rich has benefitted the community in a variety of ways. He founded the Fast Start program, which has equipped in demand employees with the skills they need to be successful. He also has volunteered and advocated for local organizations serving those in need, chairing Midland County's United Way Campaign in 2016.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Michigan, I am honored today to recognize Rich Wells for his service to The Dow Chemical Company and his contributions to the Great Lakes Bay Region.

**PERSONAL EXPLANATION**

**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2017*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on September 13, 2017, I missed a series of Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call votes 486, 487, 488, 489, 492, 493, 497, 498, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, and 515. I would have voted NAY on Roll Call votes 490, 491, 494, 495, 496, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, and 514.

**PERSONAL EXPLANATION**

**HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2017*

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, on September 14, I was unavoidably detained off

the House floor and was not present for Roll Call 528, the vote on final passage of H.R. 3354. Had I been present, I would have voted "No." As our nation comes together to help those affected by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, I am saddened that members of Congress were not given the opportunity to come together to provide all of the people of our country the support they need to meet the many challenges they face and to invest in their future. This eight bill spending package was considered under a restrictive process that severely limited the ability of members to influence the bill. I could not in good conscience vote for this bill because it is based on the devastating House Republican budget, meaning that it underfunds and makes significant cuts to many of my constituents' key priorities such as job training, education, fixing our crumbling infrastructure, economic development, Pell Grants, housing affordability, after-school programs, and law enforcement. It attacks women's health by cutting family planning and Teen Pregnancy Prevention Grants and defunding Planned Parenthood, and it includes many poison pill policy riders that will undermine the Affordable Care Act, undo many important Dodd-Frank Wall Street reforms, and prevent the EPA from keeping our air and water clean. As the Ranking Member of the Homeland Security Subcommittee, I find it inexplicable that as we work to recover from Hurricanes Harvey and Irma and see new storms on the horizon, the bill slashes funding for programs that build resilience and can be used for prevention and recovery and it weakens efforts to understand and address climate change, a driving factor of more frequent and severe storms. I repeatedly tried to shift funding in the bill for immigration enforcement activities to more pressing homeland security needs, but I was rebuffed on party line votes. Instead of this short-sighted bill that would be disastrous for all Americans, I call on Republicans to join Democrats to enact spending bills that grow the economy, create jobs, and truly keep our nation secure.

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND  
HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES  
AND UNIVERSITIES GRANTS**

**HON. TERRI A. SEWELL**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2017*

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to state my excitement that Democrats and Republicans were able to come together to add two million dollars to the Historic Preservation Fund grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities in the FY18 appropriations bill passed on the House floor today.

Last year, Congress appropriated \$4 million for grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities under the National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund. Unfortunately, this year President Trump's FY18 budget eliminated all funding for this program. I was glad to see that both Democrats and Republicans strongly disagreed with President Trump's misguided cut, and ultimately decided to increase the total funding of HBCU grants to \$5 million for FY18.

My district, the 7th Congressional District of Alabama, is well-known as the Civil Rights

District. The State of Alabama is also home to fifteen Historically Black Colleges and Universities, the most in the country. These important grants will provide assistance to repair and restore historic buildings on our HBCU campuses. Our HBCUs are rich with history that deserves to be preserved for future generations, and I can think of no better institution than our Nation's storytellers, the National Park Service, to do the job. Moreover, this funding will help revitalize our HBCU campuses, and help stimulate economic revitalization in their communities.

Again, I would like to thank Chairman CALVERT and Ranking Member MCCOLLUM for working with me in the past, as well as Assistant Leader CLYBURN for offering an Amendment to increase HBCU Grant funding by \$2 million. This is an important program for our HBCUs, and I will continue to work across the aisle to ensure that these funds are protected in the final FY18 budget.

**HONORING BEN WILLIAMS**

**HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 14, 2017*

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, jazz artist Ben Williams will be honored this year by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation at the Jazz Forum and Concert during the 47th Annual Legislative Conference. Mr. Williams, an internationally renowned bassist and composer, will also perform his Protest Anthology at the concert, which will take place on Thursday, September 21, 2017, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, in Washington, D.C. Mr. Williams will receive the 2017 CBCF ALC Jazz Innovator Award for his highly creative and multi-faceted contributions to jazz and world culture.

I am very proud to have known this very talented artist for many years. I am also pleased to share the following details of his impressive career as they appear in his biography.

Ben's mother used to work in my Capitol Hill office. When she took Ben, an energetic and curious six-year-old, into the office on his school break, a watchful eye was in order. One afternoon, while rambling around my personal office, Ben discovered a huge object that instantly captured his imagination. The shiny upright bass was like nothing the kid had ever seen. He tapped on it. He popped a string. He climbed up on it. "What is this thing?" he wondered.

Twenty years later, Ben Williams is still surprised at that chance meeting.

"Its low frequency attracted me," Williams recalls, "the way the instrument felt when I touched it. Then later, just the feeling of playing a groove. When you play a bass the whole instrument vibrates. It almost feels like the spirit of another human being. It's like dancing with somebody and being in full contact with them. And the sound of the instrument appealed to me. It's warm and deep and it resonated with me."

On the eve of his first CD, State of Art, Ben Williams had become one of the most sought after bassists in the world, his resume a who's who of jazz wisdom: Wynton Marsalis, Herbie Hancock, Pat Metheny, Terence Blanchard, Christian McBride Big Band, Nicholas Payton,